

Amendments to the Claims:

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1.-3. (Cancelled)

Claim 4. (New) A method of operating a drive system for a motor vehicle having an internal combustion engine and an electric machine which can accelerate a driveshaft of the internal combustion engine; wherein:

when the motor vehicle starts, the electric machine increases an idling rotational speed of the driveshaft of the internal combustion engine.

Claim 5. (New) The method as claimed in Claim 4, wherein the electric machine drives the internal combustion engine via a belt.

Claim 6. (New) The method as claimed in Claim 4, wherein:

an exhaust gas turbocharger is used to increase charge pressure of the internal combustion engine; and

an increase in the idling rotational speed compensates for low efficiency of the turbocharger at low rotational speeds.

Claim 7. (New) The method as claimed in Claim 5, wherein:

an exhaust gas turbocharger is used to increase charge pressure of the internal combustion engine; and

an increase in the idling rotational speed compensates for low efficiency of the turbocharger at low rotational speeds.

Claim 8. (New) A method of operating a vehicle propulsion system in which an electric motor is coupled to a drive shaft of an internal combustion engine to propel the vehicle, said method comprising:

using said internal combustion engine to propel the vehicle;

during a disengagement of a vehicle clutch for gear shifting causing said electric motor to accelerate a rotational speed of said drive shaft; and

engaging said clutch when said rotational speed reaches a predetermined value.

Claim 9. (New) The method according to Claim 8, wherein one of the following is true:

i) the electric motor drives the internal combustion engine via a belt; and

ii) the electric motor is integrated with the drive shaft of the internal combustion engine.